

For Immediate Release

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*Washington, D.C.* – On March 2, 2010, the United States Postal Service (USPS) announced a 10-year plan to address declining revenue and mail volume. In light of Postmaster General John E. Potter's outlined plan of cost cutting and an array of legislative and regulatory changes, Congressman Sires sent a letter to Subcommittee Chairman Stephen Lynch, inquiring about the status of H.R. 658, the Access to Postal Services Act of 2009. The letter, dated March 2, 2010, urges Chairman Lynch to continue to provide necessary services to constituents and encourages committee action.

"It is essential to keep the USPS a part of American communities," said Congressman Sires. "That is why I have introduced the Access to Postal Services Act—to work to provide communities the tools to protect their postal services."

Congressman Sires introduced H.R. 658, the Access to Postal Services Act in January, 2009 to give constituents access to the USPS's process for closing post offices. The USPS began a review in 2009 examining 3,300 postal facilities for possible closure or consolidation. Currently, about 170 post offices across the country remain under review. While some post office closings may be justified, too often the public is left out of the decision-making process. H.R. 658 would provide a unified and more transparent closing process for postal facilities and would require USPS to notify both public officials and the customers of the affected post office at each step of the post office closing process.

"As we rebuild the fiscal health of the USPS, it is incredibly important to ensure that those communities most vulnerable to change will continue to have access to postal services--especially senior, rural and commuter populations," said Sires.

H.R. 658 has already garnered large bi-partisan support with 99 co-sponsors and is currently pending before the Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service and the District of Columbia.

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